DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 420 338 JC 980 284

TITLE	ACCJC 1996-1997 Annual Report.
INSTITUTION	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Santa Rosa, CA.
PUB DATE	1998-01-00
NOTE	15p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Accreditation (Institutions); *Accrediting Agencies; Annual Reports; College Governing Councils; *Community Colleges; Disclosure; *Educational Policy; Financial Policy; Governing Boards; Money Management; Partnerships in Education; Peer Evaluation; Personnel Policy; Public Policy; Self Evaluation (Groups); Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

The 1996-97 Annual Report from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) provides public disclosure of the Commission's procedures and policies to help renew public confidence in the importance and effectiveness of peer review and self-regulation in accreditation. The report begins with messages from the Commission's Chair (Constance Carroll) and Executive Director (David B. Wolf), followed by an analysis of team reports (by Judith Watkin, Associate Executive Director). This section discusses planning, personnel issues, board of trustees, governance, student services, diversity issues, program review, learning resources, and district/college relationships. The next section (by A. Darlene Pacheco, Assistant Director) addresses the issue of improving communication, describing various manuals, guides, and activities that serve to enhance communication between ACCJC, members of the Commission, institutional members, and the public at large. Commission actions concerning member institutions are then listed according to the date the actions took place. Next is a table summarizing Commission actions from 1992-93, through June 1997. Policy actions of 1997 are then discussed, followed by a summary of staff reports. The final section provides the budget summary for the year ending June 30, 1997, identifying revenue and expense amounts. A list of commissioners and staff is provided. (YKM)

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ED 420 338

ACCJC

1996-1997

ANNUAL REPORT

Accrediting Commission for Community
and Junior Colleges

3402 Mendocino Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

JC 980 284

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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D. B. Wolf

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges has assigned top priority to one of the most difficult issues presently confronting all regional accrediting bodies: public disclosure. Through the work of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, through consultation with a variety of external publics, and as the result of the Commission's own self study, it has become clear that ACCJC should continue to make a strong effort to provide information to the public regarding its own actions and regarding the general well being of its member institutions.

CONSTANCE M. CARROLL

ACCJC has already invited its members to offer suggestions on the prospect of disclosing more information about their self studies and resulting team recommendations. ACCJC has also taken steps to publicize its own relationship to institutions through statements in college catalogs and other institutions. As these and other efforts continue, however, the Commission will seek a balance between the public's right to know and sensitivity to the needs of the member colleges.

With the publication of this first annual report, the Accrediting Commission is taking another step, an important step, in the direction of public disclosure. I commend the Executive Director and staff, as well as my fellow Commissioners, for being willing to display the full range of the Commission's recent progress and actions for public scrutiny. While demystifying our work as evaluators and while "opening our books" for review, I hope this effort will also help reanimate public confidence in the importance and effectiveness of peer-review and self-regulation as the hallmarks of American accreditation.

Constance M. Carroll
Chair, ACCJC
President, San Diego Mesa College

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

David B. Wolf

This inaugural Annual Report focuses on the Commission's work during 1996-97, my first year as Executive Director ... and there is much to say.

First it is a privilege to serve in this capacity. The work of the ACCJC--and that of the entire accreditation community in this country--has always been important, and one can easily argue that the issues before us today are of unusual significance. As well, this particular Commission has amassed a great deal of wisdom on the full range of matters which it must consider, and has exercised its authority in a fashion that has warranted widespread respect. In this regard much is due to those who have led the Commission, and to my predecessors Harry Wiser, Bob Swenson, and most particularly John Petersen (and mention must also be made of the contributions of Sue Lundquist who retired in 1996 after 16 years as Administrative Assistant and Mary Ann Hilmes who managed the team data base). The legacy of those who have shaped the ACCJC is a most remarkable gift.

In 1996-97 the Commission performed its traditional functions. Twenty-three comprehensive evaluations were conducted along with reviews of an array of special reports and visits. Teams were formed, trained and supported, and two Commission meetings were held where appropriate actions were taken.

But this last year has featured important changes. The offices moved from Aptos to Santa Rosa and the new offices are working well. Changes have taken place within the staff. Judith Watkins is now Associate Executive Director, Darlene Pacheco is our first ever Assistant Director, Barbara Dunham manages the office and Tom Lane provides administrative support to all of us. This group has introduced important changes in our operations which are increasing our capacity and improving the efficiency of many of our routines.

Some of this has to do with technology. While it is true that the office is putting the computer and telecommunications to new uses, the Commission has taken the broader view and established an *Ad Hoc* Committee on Telecommunications and Electronic Data Storage to examine the impact of technology on the relations between the ACCJC and its member institutions. This group will be offering recommendations which will further introduce electronic media into accreditation transactions.

The Commission held a two-day retreat in San Diego in March 1997. The topics discussed there foretell of areas where change can be anticipated: public disclosure, distance education, and the role of the federal government in regional accreditation (as conveyed through the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act). Based largely on the outcomes of this retreat, an *Ad Hoc Policy* Committee was formed; the list of items on which it will deliberate has lengthened rapidly.

Many other matters of importance emerged over the year, but let me address only one of these: interregional relations. Historically the eight higher education commissions within the six national regions interacted in only a limited fashion. That is all changing as federal oversight, technologically based institutions that operate across regions, and the desire to share good accreditation practice motivate a broader perspective. The newly formed Council for Higher Education Accreditation will, I think, provide useful support for the development of enhanced interregional relations.

This first year has been eventful. Important work has been continued and some new ideas are emerging. I am satisfied that some good was done, and that much good lies ahead.

David B. Wolf

Judith Watkins

ANALYSIS OF TEAM REPORTS

by
Judith Watkins

Evaluation team reports submitted to the Commission in June 1997 were analyzed by staff for common elements that might signal trends in institutional compliance with Commission standards. The analysis revealed several frequently-cited areas of concern. They are discussed below in the order of the magnitude in which they occurred in team reports.

Planning

Virtually every team cited lack of planning as an institutional problem. Specifically, the teams noted lack of strategic and comprehensive master planning, and failure to link systematic planning processes to budget development. Teams also found deficiencies in the use of institutional research and data analysis in the development of both short-term and long-term plans. Institutional plans were not data-driven because colleges had failed to develop research agendas. In several instances, teams expressed concern that institutions had not developed clear-cut notions of their priorities so that planning could proceed. As a result, many institutions were not able to use credible student outcomes information to demonstrate institutional effectiveness.

And in a related matter, teams noted that many institutions do not have wide spread campus involvement in the planning process, nor do they communicate planning and planning issues to the campus at-large in an effective manner.

One particular area of planning mentioned by most teams, was the area of fiscal planning as it relates to facilities and to the connection between facilities and the educational programs of the institution. Other concerns about fiscal planning had to do with the lack of budget planning processes, long-range fiscal planning, and unfunded or long-term liabilities.

Personnel Issues

Many teams expressed concern about a lack of coherent hiring policies and procedures, as well as institutional inattention to the equitable application of hiring policies to all categories of staff. They also noted the serious lack of attention paid to diversifying the composition of faculty to reflect student demographics. Teams found that many institutions were not setting hiring priorities.

On another personnel matter, many teams commented on deficiencies in evaluation, particularly of the faculty (full-time, part-time, and non-teaching), but including evaluation of support staff. Most of the instances cited related to lack of systematic evaluation of staff or inconsistent implementation of evaluations.

Staffing was also a major concern of teams. Colleges were urged by evaluations teams to review staffing in relationship to new growth and in support of student learning. As new forms of educational delivery transform member institutions, new approaches to staff utilization need to be considered.

Finally, there were many team comments on staff development. In most of the instances mentioned, teams observed that there was inadequate institutional support for professional development. Once again, the concern of the teams was the absence of a coherent design for professional and staff development which would enhance the quality of the educational experience.

(continued on page 4)

Board of Trustees
Most teams found problems with the manner in which Boards of Trustees were functioning. These concerns included public and private, elected and appointed, Boards. In particular, there were many statements about the need for Boards to clarify their roles in relationship to the colleges in terms of governance, and in accordance with their own bylaws and regulations. The term "micromanagement" appeared with distressing frequency. Several recommendations related to the need for Board self-evaluation to assess the quality of Board performance.

Governance
Several teams reported governance issues. Most frequently mentioned were concerns about lack of clarification, formalization, and evaluation of faculty roles in governance. Some teams spoke to the need for including classified staff as part of the team, and one team mentioned the middle managers as a group often left out of the governance process. Concern over student involvement in governance was referred to by one team.

Student Services
Recommendations on student services were many and varied. One common concern was that the organizational structure of student services interfered with effective delivery of services to students because reporting lines for staff were not clear. Staffing, space issues for student services, and the relationships between student services and other departments of the college were of concern to some teams. The needs for student tracking and/or follow up on transfer was cited by several teams.

Diversity Issues
Many teams found that diversity issues were not being addressed. Teams referred to lack of curriculum and learning activities on diversity issues, lack of student activities regarding appreciation of diversity, and no development of diversity plans and/or a committee to deal with such issues.

Program Review
Recommendations on program review appeared in several team reports. In particular, teams urged that institutions link the program review to the planning process and that institutions include course and curriculum review as part of this effort. There were some instances where teams reported a complete absence of program review, and the teams made strong recommendations to those institutions.

Learning Resources
The greatest concern referenced in this area had to do with a lack of comprehensive plans for dealing with the technology supporting instruction. The other primary area of concern had to do with financial support in general and for increasing delivery of library service to students, particularly at night and on weekends.

District/College Relationships
No consistent picture emerges in analyzing reports from visits to multi-college districts and systems. Most commonly noted were the need for equitable resource allocation models and the integration of district planning processes with college planning process, particularly in regards to budget. Teams also noted the difficulty of developing effective recommendations to an institution when that institution was part of a larger entity and the issues required involvement, and in some cases, resolution by other parties. The Commission will consider appropriate adjustments to the Standards of Accreditation to include a separate section of the self study for these matters.

Visiting teams focus on planning, research, and personnel as major institutional issues.

Toward Improving Communication

by

A. Darlene Pacheco, Assistant Director

A. Darlene Pacheco

The essence of a good relationship, whether it is a personal or an organizational one, is good communication. Good communication aims to inform and to clarify, to provide the opportunity for a reciprocal understanding of the issues at hand. Accordingly, in this past year ACCJC staff have focused on improving communication with members and the public in a variety of ways. Manuals were revised, a new video was produced, plans were developed for publishing the ACCJC newsletter quarterly, a Web site was developed, and publication of an annual report was planned. In addition, publication of the Commission address and telephone number in member catalogs was required, resulting in an increase in the number of inquiries from the public. All of these activities have served to enhance communication between ACCJC, members of the Commission, institutional members, and the public at-large.

Staff undertook revision of each of the manuals central to the relationship between members and the Commission. The **Handbook of Accreditation and Policy Manual** was updated and the **Team Chair Handbook** was revised and presented during training sessions this Fall. Focusing on functional issues and questions frequently raised by team leaders, the Handbook engendered enthusiasm among those who were to lead teams during the academic year. The **Handbook for Evaluators** was also updated to include practical support for those who were to serve on teams. It, too, was well received during training sessions. Finally, the **Guide to Institutional Self Study and Policy Manual** was edited to provide member institutions with practical guides to self assessment. Attendees at training sessions expressed appreciation for its new format.

Working with **Harry Ratner** of **Coastline College**, **Associate Executive Director Judith Watkins** directed the creation of a new video designed to train evaluators. Shown at team training sessions for the first time this Fall, the video proved to be an excellent introduction for new evaluators and an enjoyable refresher for those with team experience.

For many years, the ACCJC Newsletter has been published twice a year. Staff now plan to produce the newsletter in house and on a quarterly basis. Publication will occur in late January, Mid-April, late June, and mid-October. For the first time, an October newsletter was produced .

In late summer and early Fall, staff developed a Web site that will be made accessible through WASC. The Web site is being developed in two phases, with phase one including basic information about ACCJC and its functions. Phase two will make available to members the Handbooks and information about accreditation in the interest of furthering communication in an electronic environment.

Good communication is the essence of a good relationship. ACCJC staff members are dedicated to the continued improvement of communication with Commission and institutional members, and with the public.

COMMISSION ACTIONS: MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

ACTIONS TAKEN JANUARY 1997:

Reaffirmed Accreditation
Cuesta College
Laney College
Long Beach City College
Palomar College
Pasadena City College
Santa Barbara City College
Santa Rosa Junior College

Placed on Probation
American Samoa Community College

Accepted Reports of Interim Visits
College of the Sequoias
Lassen College (continued probationary status)
Leeward Community College
Palo Verde College (continued probationary status)

Accepted Reports of Midterm Visits
Barstow College
College of Alameda
Hartnell College
Hawaii Tokai International College
Heald Colleges
Mt. San Jacinto College
West Los Angeles College

Accepted Midterm Reports
City College of San Francisco
Coastline Community College
DeAnza College
Feather River College
Foothill College
Fresno City College
Fullerton College
Guam Community College
Kelsey-Jenney College
Kings River Community College
Lake Tahoe Community College
Modesto Junior College
Queen of the Holy Rosary
Solano Community College

Accepted focused Midterm Reports
College of the Redwoods
Columbia College
Defense Language Institute
Los Angeles Harbor College
Shasta College
Yuba College

Received Substantive Change Report
Coastline Community College

Accepted Progress Reports
Bakersfield College
Porterville College
Compton Community College
Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising
Irvine Valley College

Progress Report Not Accepted
San Joaquin Valley College

ACTIONS TAKEN JUNE 1997:

Reaffirmed Accreditation
American Academy of Dramatic Arts West
Butte College
Chabot College
College of the Canyons
College of the Marshall Islands
Cosumnes River College
East Los Angeles College
Las Positas College
Los Angeles City College
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
Merritt College
San Bernardino Valley College
Southwestern College
Taft College
Vista College

Accepted Interim Reports
Mission College

Accepted Midterm Report and Reaffirmed Accreditation
Los Angeles Pierce College

Accepted Progress Reports
Coastline Community College
Don Bosco Technical Institute
Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising
Saddleback College
San Joaquin Valley College
Solano Community College

Progress Report Not Accepted
Irvine Valley College

Accepted Progress Reports with Visit
American Samoa Community College (continued probationary status)
Compton Community College
Lassen College (probation removed)
Palo Verde College (continued probationary status)
West Valley College

Accepted Eligibility Reviews
Santiago Canyon College
MTI-Western Business College

Received Substantive Change Report
Cabrillo College
Cuesta College
Rancho Santiago Community College
Santa Monica College
Sierra College, Western Nevada County Campus

Substantive Change Not Approved
Sierra College, Partnering with Proprietary Schools

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION ACTIONS

1992-93 through June 1997

Action	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Applicant	3	0	4 (denied)	1 (denied)	2
Candidacy	0	1	0	0	0
Initial Accreditation	0	1	2	0	0
Reaffirm	2	6	9	5	8
Reaffirm with report	11	6	4	7	7
Reaffirm with report and visit	3	6	12	10	4
Deferral[1]	2	1	3	1	0
Warning[1]	2	2	2	3	3
Probation[2]	1	4	3	6	5
Show Cause[2, 3]	0	1	0	0	0
Termination[2,3]	0	1	0	0	0
Withdrawal/Closure/ Transfer	1	0	0	1	0
Substant.Change	7	4	4	9	6 (1 denied)
Progress Reports[4]	19 (1 denied)	13	17	8	9 (1 denied)

[1] Deferrals and Warnings are private negative actions followed by reports and visits
[2] Public negative actions followed by reports and visits
[3] Public negative action subject to ACCJC and WASC appeal process
[4] Follow-up resulting from prior Commission actions

COMMISSION ACTIONS: POLICIES

Policy actions taken in January 1997:

Conflict of interest draft

Designed to protect the integrity of the accrediting process and outcomes, the conflict of interest policy was revised to state explicit expectations for Commissioners, evaluators, consultants, and staff. The intent of this Commission policy is to maintain the credibility of the accreditation process by avoiding any allegation of undue influence by insuring fairness and impartiality in decision-making. The draft will be circulated for comment before final approval.

Catalog requirement for member institutions

This policy requires that member institutions add the Commission address and telephone number to the statement of institutional accreditation status in the college catalog since this information is now required under federal regulations regarding recognition of accrediting agencies.

Glossary of Commission actions, definitions, and usage

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the meaning of each range of actions available to evaluation teams as they consider their confidential recommendation to the Commission. In addition, the glossary clarifies the circumstances under which a range of action should be used, the time frame in which the institution should address the issues, and the consequences of each action for the institution. The Commission will use the glossary in making its determination of institutional accredited status.

Policy actions taken in June 1997:

Conflict of Interest

Draft of this policy had been circulated to the membership; the policy was adopted by the Commission at this meeting.

Fiscal reserve minimum

This policy would set a fiscal reserve minimum at 30% of the ACCJC annual operating budget. The policy will be circulated to members for comment.

Commission size

With the addition of two more public members, this policy would expand the size of the Commission to 19 members. The policy will be circulated to members for comment.

Topics for future policy formulation

Topics for future policy formulation were confirmed and include distance education, public disclosure, Commission by-laws, multi-campus districts, technology, and international education.

STAFF ACTIVITIES:
A Summary

Commission Workshops:

Date	Workshop	Location
8/22/97	Team Chairs	SFO/Westin Hotel
9/17/97	Self Study	College of Alameda
9/19/97	Teams	Mission College
9/25/97	Teams	Chaffey College
9/26/97	Self Study	Victor Valley College

Campus Visits: In an effort to maintain close contact with member institutions, staff routinely visited campuses. Forty-eight campuses were visited, including American Samoa College, Guam Community College, the Hawaii Community Colleges, Northern Marianas College, College of Micronesia, College of the Marshall Islands, and private institutions.

Meetings:

Workshops and Conferences

As participants in the higher education community, staff attended conferences of major organizations, both state and regional. A sampling of these activities was attendance at the conferences of the following: Association of California Community College Administrators, CEOs of the California Community Colleges, CIO's of the California Community Colleges, American Association of Higher Education, California Community College League, Western Governors University, the Baldrige Criteria, and the Assessment Institute sponsored in part by ACCJC.

Other Meetings

Staff attended meetings of the WASC Senior College Commission, the WASC Schools Commission, and served on a variety of committees. Among these assignments were regional and interregional committees. Staff also represented the Comission in Department of Education meetings.

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

FINANCIAL SUMMARY*

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1997

REVENUES, 1996-1997

Annual Fees	$632,960
Evaluation Service Charges	
Comprehensive Visits	$117,935
Actual Cost Visits	12,538
Interim Visits	2,854
Eligibility Reviews	2,000
Other Income	35
TOTAL REVENUES	$794,708

EXPENSES

Personnel	$348,081**
Office	112,197
Meetings/Travel/Workshops/Dues	102,371
Evaluation Visits	147,037
	$709,686

Notes:

*As reported in Independent Audit

**Expenditures exclude approved Assistant Director position postponed to 1997-1998; pay and benefits package budgeted at $91,837.

COMMISSIONERS

Constance M. Carroll
Chairperson
San Diego Mesa College

Leon Baradat
Vice Chairperson
MiraCosta College

Wallace Albertson
Public Member

Ernest Chuck Ayala
Public Member

Barbara Beno
Vista Community College

John Bibbo
Southwestern College

George Boggs
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J. Robert Evans
Kelsey-Jenney College

Sally Flotho
Golden West College

James Fontana
Santa Rita Union School District

Margaret Hartman
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Jack Hernandez
Bakersfield College

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A. Darlene Pacheco
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Barbara Dunham
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ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY
AND JUNIOR COLLEGES